



OSSTF District 24
Annual Report of the District President
May 2014

During the past two years, we have faced many uncertainties arising from the political and collective bargaining landscape. This year, those uncertainties remain with the upcoming election and collective bargaining. It is certain to provide both opportunities and challenges for all OSSTF/FEESO members.

Over the past year, we've dealt with the realities of legislation and the implementation of the MOU and now with the passage of Bill 122, which has created a formalized two-tiered bargaining structure, our traditional bargaining structures and practices in school board bargaining, will change. We now have a centralized bargaining structure within OSSTF/FEESO and congratulate Pat Hand (TBU Chief Negotiator) and Vicki Buder (ESS Chief Negotiator) who have been appointed to the Central Bargaining Advisory Work Group by the OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Executive.

For many years we have been able to avoid the effects of declining enrolment, unlike our brothers and sisters in OSSTF/FEESO throughout Ontario. However, we have now begun to feel the pains felt throughout the province as we now have been hit with a student enrolment that is declining and we are seeing schools close and reductions made to all of our positions while school boards continue to feel the pressures from the Ministry to find efficiencies – to do more with less.

Our Members in the Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region (STSWR) employed by STSWR have been engaged in difficult negotiations with their employer. This group's collective agreement expired September 2012 and they are attempting to renegotiate their second collective agreement. This small bargaining unit may need your support in the trying days ahead in the event of a lockout or a strike as they are demanding a settlement that is fair and unfettered.

As we enter the first round of bargaining in the post Bill 115 world, it is imperative that OSSTF/FEESO demand a fair process and fair settlements for all

of our members. Solidarity remains as our best defense against aggressive government agendas and employers.

We all know that the next round of bargaining will present significant challenges for OSSTF/FEESO – we may very well be in for our biggest fight yet. But that is not the only fight we face. It is abundantly clear that the labour movement will face escalating challenges. We have one political party that both federally and provincially continue to attack worker's rights. They would like to see unions without the power to help workers, to completely diminish the ability to do the good work we have always strived to achieve. This is the biggest challenge unions have ever faced. District 24 Bargaining Unit leaders have been attending Fairness Works workshops that involve fostering members' attachment to their union, election strategy and readiness meetings, rallies in an effort to #STOPHUDAK and the new District 24 Political Action Committee has a communication plan to educate members on the upcoming provincial election. Thank you to the committee members for their participation in political action and the crazy few weeks ahead that they will be facing.

District 24 Political Action Committee

Vicki Buder – Chair & District President Diane Flewwelling -ESS/STSWR
Paula Ferrerra –PSSP Brent Harrington -CAMA
Lisa Mitchell –AEICW Helen McKay -PSSP)
Carrie Osborne – Secretary -PSSP

Participation on our local Waterloo Region Labour Council has also seen an increase from 1 delegate to 5. Thank you to our delegates who have offered their free time to attend Labour Council on behalf of District 24.

Labour Council Delegates

Vicki Buder –District President Diane Flewwelling -ESS/STSWR
Carrie Osborne –PSSP Shelley Shaw -TBU
Fred Stien -TBU

A great deal of work was also taken to review our District Constitution which will result in many housekeeping and updated articles. During the review of the constitution it was noted that we had moved away from some of the practices outlined in the constitution and it was recommended by the Work Group and endorsed by the District Executive that we revert back to the practices outlined and as such, for the first time the District Finance Committee met and a draft budget was prepared by the Committee which will be approved at the Annual

General Meeting. The District Finance Committee will continue in the future to meet to implement the budgetary process and recommend and advise on District budgetary and financial matters.

District Finance Committee

David Vandenberg – Chair & District Treasurer Vicki Buder – District President
Karen Sotiriou – AEICW Ana Blaska - AEICW
David Bragg – CAMA Darryl Barnes – CAMA
Diane Flewwelling – ESS Karen Logel – ESS
Carrie Osborne – PSSP Sherry Freund – TBU
Evelyn Kassa – SMACA Bill Weatherbee - SMACA

Many thanks to the Constitution Work Group for their keen eye and love for working with constitutional language!

Constitution Work Group

Vicki Buder – District President Sherry Freund - TBU
Carrie Osborne – PSSP Darryl Weber – TBU

Methods of communication in District 24 have grown. We have renewed and refreshed our District website <http://www.d24.osstf.ca/>. Check it out for all the information you need to keep you up-to-date in news and information. Also, new to us this year is a Facebook page and a Twitter account. Give us a “LIKE” or a “FOLLOW” at:

Facebook – OSSTF District 24 Waterloo
Twitter - @OSSTFDistrict24

A Work Group was also formed this year to develop a job description for our Office Manager. Thanks to the Work Group for the time spent on this work.

Office Manager Job Description Work Group

Vicki Buder – District President Diane Flewwelling – ESS
Sherry Freund – TBU Dayle Whittaker – TBU
Sandra Ernst – Office Manager

District 24 has now become a little bit more environmentally friendly. TerraCycling is a new environmental initiative that began this past winter. It provides a free waste collection program for hard to recycle materials which then

turns the waste into affordable green products. Please bring in your old cell phones, batteries, coffee bags, health & beauty bottles/containers and Tassimo cups. Also, we have recently had bee hives installed onto our property. Many thanks to Sherry Freund for taking on this initiative and making District 24 just a little bit greener!

District 24 congratulations Ty Dickson from GPSS on his winning entry in the Senior, 11-12 College/Workplace category of the OSSTF/FEESO Student Achievement Awards. The 2014 OSSTF/FEESO Student Achievement Awards saw an increase in submissions this year and after rigorous District, Regional and Provincial judging, Ty was one of 8 students from across the Province who was recognized along with his teacher, Debra Derman at the Annual Meeting of Provincial Assembly.

And speaking of the Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly, District 24 was very active at the microphones this year and saw many first timers speak at the microphone to address the many motions that were brought to the floor. District 24 was also successful in their motion that was presented during budget deliberations which will reduce the quantity of pocket planners that will be produced.

Many have contributed to the success of our District over the past year and the strength of our District 24 members at the Provincial level is evident as well! Many of our District members have made contributions to support the work of our union on Provincial Committees and Councils.

Provincial Councillors

David Bragg
Diane Flewwelling
Sherry Freund
Pat Hand
Evelyn Kassa
Carrie Osborne
Karen Sotiriou

Collective Bargaining Committee

Vicki Buder – Chairperson

Judicial Council

Joyce Gingerich

First Nations, Inuit, Metis Advisory Work Group

Deborah Moore
Marjorie Paleshi

Long Term Disability Ad Hoc Work Group

Dayle Whittaker

Provincial Benefits Ad Hoc Advisory Work Group

Dayle Whittaker

On behalf of the members of District 24, I would like to thank the District Executive. In addition to the work they perform for their bargaining units, many hours have gone into supporting the work of the District.

District Executive

Treasurer - David Vandenberg
Recording Secretary - Laurel Brown
Vice President – David Bragg – CAMA
Vice President – Diane Flewwelling – ESS
Vice President – Sherry Freund – TBU
Vice President – Evelyn Kassa - SMACA
Vice President – Carrie Osborne - PSSP
Vice President - Karen Sotiriou – AEICW
CAMA Representative – Darryl Barnes
ESS Representative – Mike Mayer
TBU Representative – Darryl Weber

OSSTF/FEESO Executive Assistant Liaison – Karl Dean
OSSTF/FEESO Executive Officer – Rob Gascho

I would also like to take the opportunity to say thank you to Sandy Ernst our District Office Manager. Her organization and dedicated work in support of our members is greatly appreciated. We are extremely lucky to have Sandy!

Finally, I want to thank all members for all of their support and hard work over the past year. It is difficult to predict what lies ahead for the next year however our strength, our resilience, our continued collaboration of working together, derived from the commitment and dedication of members and bargaining unit leaders, will see us through to success and help us win the day.

We are strongest when we are inclusive. I challenge all members to get involved in their union. I invite and encourage all members to join a Provincial, District or bargaining unit committee. Consider putting your name forward for labour council. Participate in member engagement activities. Get out and vote in the upcoming election.

“Let us not take thought for our separate interests, but let us help one another.”

**Respectfully submitted,
Vicki Buder, District 24 President
May 20, 2014**